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# On Hysteria.

# Of Hysteria.

For the history of the Symptoms of this Sir Richd. Blackmore
Disease, I refer you to Dr Sydenham, and Dr
Cullen who have described them not only cor=
=rectly, but with eloquence. It is an epitome, or
concentration of all disease.

I shall briefly enumerate some of its
most striking peculiarities and Symptoms.

1 It is seated primarily in the Nerves, mus=
=cles, Alimentary Canal, but rarely affects
the blood vessels. In this respect only it differs
from the Gout which affects the blood vessels
with all those parts of the body which are
affected by Hysteria, or perhaps it is more pro=
=per to say it is Gout in the form of muslin
or tiffany instead of broad cloath, for it is
brought on by the Operation of most of the

V the cepation of the ovaries, but I have
one ~~sister~~ seen it in two sisters. the
one but two, and the other but six years
old. It remarkable ~~its effects~~ when an
apparently robust Constitution does not
protect women from it.

3 The Hysteria appears in a Chronic form without
intermissions

4 It appears in paroxysms with a perfect freedom
from all its Symptoms in its intervals.
The paroxysms are more severe in this
case than when they are followed by the
Chronic form of the Disease.

causes that induce Gout acting only upon
the Nervous, Muscular & Alimentary Predispo-
=sitions. ~~When it affects the blood Vessels & Colon Life~~
=It the first settlement of New En=
~~called it "Hysterico Catharica"~~
=gland it was common to ascribe all Anomalous
diseases to witchcraft. ~~Thus Dr Cotton~~ In modern times all
~~Anomalous~~ to Anomalous diseases are ascribed
to the Gout

2 It affects women more than men, ~~in the~~
~~proportion of ten to One~~ and ~~that~~ in Con=
=sequence of the Nerves, muscles & Alimentary
Canal peculiar more predisposition in women to be affected
upon by visitants than the same parts in
Men. It appears chiefly between puberty & 45
3 It appears in paroxysms, and with chronic
~~a chronic form with out~~ Symptoms in its intervals. ÷
~~Paroxysms.~~

4 It appears in paroxysms and with
chronic Symptoms in its intervals.

5 It appears in paroxysms, with a perfect

V likewise in appearing in paroxysms,
& in imperfect and perfect intermissions.

~~freedom from all its Symptoms in its entire~~ =
~~The paroxysms in this case are more severe~~
=Vals. ~~In this case they~~ than when they are followed by chronic ~~Symptoms~~
You will perceive here a striking illus=
=tration of the Unity or Sameness of disease in
two different Systems. The Hysteria you see
corresponds exactly to the fever in being accom=
=panied with paroxysms, remissions only,
and intermissions. It accords with the Joint
5 5 The mind under all the forms of Hysteria
that have been described is capricious, and
fickle and that to such a degree (to use the
words of D^r Sydenham) as to be constantly
in inconstancy. A disposition to weep and
laugh upon the most trifling Occasions belongs
to the hysterical ~~Constitution~~ predisposition. ~~In this~~ It is because
Children and Old people posess so much of this
predisposition that they weep more readily &
easily than persons in Adult life. A disposition

to laugh ~~is equally~~ upon occasions that ought
not to excite laughter belongs likewise to
this ~~constitut~~ predisposition. ~~This proposes~~ It is
so deeply seated in some people as to elude the
command of their Wills, and to appear in
places that do not accord with it. The Rev.
Mr Duche formerly an eloquent & popular preac-
-cher in this city was so forcibly affected
with this predisposition in the last years of his
life, that he laughed at every thing he said
or did. Even in middle life his wife informed
me he was often obliged to pinch himself
severely in the pulpit, in order to prevent
his laughing at some trifling Object that oc-
-curred to his eyes or his imagination.
I have said this disease rarely affects the blood-
-vessels. When it does, which is sometimes the
case in its paroxysms, ~~it~~ a Suspension
~~of the faculties of the mind takes place in a transient~~
~~fit of derangement~~.

of ~~the~~ the hysterical Symptoms generally follows. This translation of the Disease to the blood vessels may be known by the pulse. Dr Whyt mentions a Case of this kind in a lady of 30 years of age who was affected with hysteria in whom the disease ceased as soon as her pulse became full & active. This Change in her pulse was induced by a translation of ~~a~~ sanbid excitement to the blood vessels of the brain, for the Delirious
brain at the same time ~~maniacal~~. In
mania preceded by ~~the Symptoms of~~ Hysteria ~~which~~ most
& sometimes all its Symptoms cease ~~and~~
with the coming on of that disease of the brain, and it is remarkable the Hysteria often returns with the Cessation of Madness. While I thus confine Hysteria to the nervous muscular & Alimentary Systems I beg you

V here between a fullness, and a convulsive
action or force in the blood vessels. The former
often exists with all the Symptoms of Hyp:
=teria. It has been called by Dr Cullen
Hysteria plethorica.

would suffice that it sometimes blends itself with all the other Systems in the body. In a paroxysm of Hysteria every fibre of every System in the body is brought into Consentaneous Sympathy with the Nervous muscular & alimentary Systems, and every in spasms of every kind, we sometimes meet with a disturbing & perplexing miniature of hysterical Symptoms. You will Distinguish

The Hysteria is sometimes suspended by the Craving for food, or Appetite, but less than by the craving or Eagerness, & from the same cause, — that is the absorption or attraction of the disease from its ordinary seats to the stomach.

It is distinguished from Epilepsy by not affecting the blood vessels, and by its paroxysms rarely affecting the regular exercises

V ~~in the Systematic~~ and derived chiefly from
the nerves which ~~spre~~ spring from the medulla
Spinalis instead of the brain, ~~it might be~~
~~called Spinal Epilepsy~~

7 M In being induced by corporeal as well as
mental causes. Hippocondriasis is
induced chiefly, or perhaps only by mental
causes.

of the mind. In short it is Epilepsy in all the Systems except the blood vessels, ~~from the trouble~~ ✓
9 It is distinguished from Hypocondriasis or Tristimania

1 By depending upon debility of the nervous Sys=
=tem, that is a mixture of excess of sensibility & irrita=
=bility. Hipocondriasis depends upon torpor or stupor, and sometimes upon a mixture of both in the nervous System.

2 By affecting men more than Women.

4 By the absence of the Globus hystericus & Dyspepsia.

5 By being worse in warm Weather, & most common in Warm Climates. & that rarely.

6 By being attended only with transient alienation of mind ^

VI I have followed the Nosologists in delivering these diagnostic marks of these two diseases of the nervous System, but take notice, they often blend their Symptoms with each Other, & they grow & then alternate with each Other. Hystiria Sometimes moreover precedes, and

V There is some cases of hypteria a constant
Spirit of hippocondriac glooms, and in ~~others~~
a constant Spirit of levity, ~~and~~ which dis=
=covers itself in the body and mind being
always primed for mirth or a fit of laughter.

it
again succeeds Hippocondriasis. One more ∨
∧

The remote Causes of Hysteria are corporeal & mental. The former are Obstructions of the menses, or an inordinate flow of them — flour albus, — Obstructed Viscera, — Strong Drink, strong an acid humor of any kind, worms &
tea —. It is from the general use of the two last of those causes that it prevails as much in Kitchens and in humble life, as in the Chambers of the higher ranks of Society. Its mental Causes are anger, malice, envy, jealousy, and strong venereal desires.

Its exciting Causes are the sudden operation of ~~any of~~ its remote Causes, and in addition to them — offensive smells, impure air, fatigue, and the sudden emotions of terror, joy, and surprize.

The Hysteria is seldom a fatal disease in its simple state, but from its frequent visits, and to other Systems ~~it~~ and particularly to the Viscera, it often brings on other diseases which terminate in death.

I will give you a more complete history of one of its paroxysms and of its chronic Symptoms I refer you to the writings of Dr Sydenham, Dr Cullen, and Sir Richard Blackmore. I shall give you a Summary of one in order the better to enable you to understand the theory of the disease

The Symptoms of a paroxysm of Hysteria are a trembling arrise in the belly, a sense of a globe ascending from the abdomen to the Stomach and fauces, accompanied with a sense of Strangulation - a cold sensation upon the crown of the head called Clavis hystericus, - a like sensation of cold along the back - - Gaping, Screaming, sobbing, crying, convulsive motions of the limbs, or of the whole body & tetanus pale Urine, - Sleepiness, Syncope & apparent Asphixia in which state the

patient sometimes lies for 20 or 25 minutes and then and then longer, and from which she emerges with crying, sobbing, convulsions in the limbs, clinched hands and teeth, & finally with a deep groan succeded by stillness which closes the paroxysm.

Sometimes a paroxysm of Hysteria comes on with an exquisite pain in the head, back, stomach and bowels which extends after a while to the limbs, where it produces ~~a~~ ~~sweller~~ ars hysterical Rheumatism which continues after the cessation of the fit for several days or weeks. It differs from common Rheumatism by affecting the Skin, membranes & muscles only and never the Joints, or ligaments. —

Again — a paroxysm sometimes comes on with convulsions resembling Epilepsy, & a sudden swelling of the belly from which Wind issues upwards & downwards with

a great noise. These Symptoms are preceded by more or less of the Symptoms before decri=

=bed. —

The Symptoms of a Chronic Hysteria, or of imperfect intermissions are Head Ach, Ver=

=tigo, flatulency, Colic, Colica pictonus, Cough Dyspnœa, palpitation of the heart, Ischuria, Lumbago, Rheumatism, Coldness of the feet, crown of the head and back, Swellings of the face, ~~and~~ thro at & legs resembling Dropsy, but differing from them in being transient, & in ~~opening down~~ being most obvious ~~Appearing most~~ in the morn=

=ning instead of the evening — a Salivation, numbness of the limbs & sometimes Palsy and Apoplexy. Epi=

= All these Symptoms are more or less painful & distressing according to the greater, or less degree in which the Hysteria invades other Systems, besides

V

4 The Hysteria appears in a chronic form without Paroxysms.

5 It appears in paroxysms, but with a perfect freedom from all its symptoms in its intervals. The paroxysms in this case are more severe than when they are followed by the chronic form of the disease.

the nerves, and particularly the blood vessels.
All these diseases differ from diseases of the
same name only by making a more
feeble impression upon the parts in which they
are seated. They resemble ~~pain~~ paintings with
~~pictures~~ Water Colors instead of Oil. It is only where
~~in water work~~
they extend to the blood vessels & substance of
the Viscera, they may be said to be
~~stamped~~ fixed with Oil Colors upon the
System.

I said formerly in treating upon the
nervous System, that Sympathies were more
prompt and extensive between the different
parts of the nerves, than any other of the Sys-
-tems of the body. This accounts for the gre-
-t Variety of
-t Commotions in them when they are
Diseased. They have been compared to the
agitations of the Ocean of the East Wind.

~~Diseases which terminate in~~ death. ~~The diseases~~ the same nature
thus induced partake of ~~all the properties~~ as if they had been brought on by other causes,
and require the same treatment.

The Remedies for this disease divide
themselves into two parts.

I Such as are proper in its paroxysms. &
II Such as are proper in its intervals, or when
it exists without paroxysms.

To the I^st head belong

1 Bleeding when the pulse is full, or when
there is reason to believe the system is plethoric.
This is generally the case when it occurs in
Women in whom the menses have recently
Obstructed, and in ~~pl~~ women of good appetites.
It is the more necessary if the brain and reason
be affected.

2 The pediluvium. 3 Garlic or mustard to the

feet.
4 Stimulating and opening Injections. Also=
=lution of Asafatida in Water, also Liquid Ene=
=Diuretics are in Some Cases useful Additions
to them.
5 As a great deal of the pain of a patient arises
from Air pent up in the bowels, it should be
discharged by forcing a Glyster pipe in the anus.
Such is the force of the ~~Force of the~~ Sphincter Muscle of
the intestines, that the Sphincter muscle has been
known to snap off the pipe, and to draw it
several inches up the bowels.
6 Stimulating Odors applied to the Nose such
as Spirit of harts horn, burnt feathers, and
Asafatida. A Physician in New England after
having tried the above Odors to no purpose, pulled
off his boot, and applied his foot Smoaking
with the Foetid Sweat of his foot to the nose of
his patient. The immediately recovered. The

more common odors had probably lost their effects from habit.

If all these remedies should fail, and the disease should assume as it sometimes does the form of asphixia

1 Cold water should be thrown upon the face, or Dropped upon the upper lip. and & the Soles of the feet, and nostrils should be tickled. These feeble stimuli often do service, after more powerful ones have been used to no purpose.

2 Liquid Laudanum combined with the Tinct=ure of Asafoetida should be given as soon as the patient is able to swallow. Tobacco & water have been found useful in discharging Wind from the Stomach.

II The Remedies proper to be administred in the intervals of the disease should be regulated

V It will be highly proper to begin the
cure by the removal of all its remote &
exciting causes. —

by the state of the System? V. If the blood vessels are plethoric, or if there is reason to believe the disease has been induced by an acid humor of any kind irritating the bowels primarily, and the nerves by sympathy, or the nerves primarily, the Remedies should be occasional bleeding, and abstenience Diet in the former case, and a diet consisting of Milk or Rennet Whey in the latter. Dr Sydenham cured an obstinate case of Hysteria by a Milk Diet, and Dr Lipot a similar one by Rennet Whey. The same simple and mild Diet is usually proper in those cases in which the nerves are too irritable to bear the stimulus of any other kind of food. I am satisfied that we often fail of curing Hysteria from inattention to the three causes of it which have been mentioned.

In cases where the intervals between the paroxysms are not accompanied with

any diseased Actions in the Nerves, and other
seats of the Hysteria, the Remedies should be
2dly Fœtids. These should be the cordial Gums,
such as Asafœtida, Galbanum, Myrrh, and Sag-
-apenum. The Asafœtida is the most active
of them. It may be given in pills, tincture or
watery infusion.
2 Bitters of all kinds. I have not found Bark
as useful in giving tone to the nervous System
as might be expected. Its tonic Vitrues are
felt chiefly by the Arterial System.
3 Certain metals. These are the preparations
of Iron, Copper, Zinc and Lead. Iron in large
Doses is perhaps preferable to any of them.
It is particularly useful when the Disease
is occasioned, or accompanied with Worms.
4 Stimulating applications to the belly, such
as the Volatile Liniment, Spirit of Turpen-
-tine, Sweet Oil, and plasters of Asafœtida,

V Warm Applications to the Spine.

galbanum, and Burgundy pitch. Also the
5 Bandages bound tight around the belly &
limbs. They give tone to the muscular system.
I have twice known them used with great
advantage. They were first suggested by Vet-
-erinus.

6 a cordial diet consisting chiefly of salted meat,
with vegetables, and a moderate quantity of
white wine or porter. The low & acid wines
and acids of all kinds should be avoided.
They all tend to destroy the ~~irritability~~ natural contrac-
~~to induce a morbid~~ -tility of the nervous system,
and to induce in it a morbid irritability.

7 Exercise especially on horseback & labor. The
latter is a radical remedy in this disease. Hun-
-dreds of women who have been compelled
to labour in consequence of being reduced in
~~their~~ circumstances have been cured by it.

V Lady Rachel Rupert was cured of an hyp:
=tirical headache of long standing by the
grief which followed the execution of her
much beloved husband Lord Wm Rupert.

Remember in the use of all these remedies to attend frequently to the pulse. all the above tonic remedies will be hurtful ~~except this~~ unless they are given in a ~~dead~~ state of the natural System, or in other words when the nerves & blood vessels are not disturbed with each other. When the pulse from any cause becomes and the patient feverish, excited, leave off your tonics until by bleeding or purges or low diet you have reduced it to a par of excitement with the nerves. & the excitement of some steady passion. Fear & grief by fixing the mind to one subject have often cured Hysteria. I have several times known it cured by the death of a Child in an hysterical Mother. Dr Cullen used to tell his pupils that the Hysteria was scarcely known in Scotland during the Rebellion in the year 1745 for during that time every woman in the

Country was under the influence of fear for
the fate of a husband, a Son or a brother in
the Royal or rebel Army. But where it is
impracticable or unapt to excite these steady
passions, some steady pursuit or employ=
=ment may be substituted in their room.
I once heard the Revd Wm Whitefield say that
the wife of an Apothecary in London was per=
=fectly cured of Hysterics by becoming a
member of his Church. The principles and
Duties of his Society dispirited by the power
of their impressions dispi=
=pated all impressions of a more feeble nature
and thus gave tone to her System. Religious
Duties and Ceremonies of all kinds are calculated
to have the same effect. They act upon the
body thro the medium of the mind. But
Domestic duties and exercises are happily
calculated to impart a similar

9 tone to the nervous System. A Diary, a garden,
a kitchen, a nursery, a domestic Manufactory
or ~~Case of any Kind Should be~~ case of any kind are all powerful remedies
for this Disease. ~~Case of any Kind is a Medicine~~ A Lady in this city who
was much afflicted with hysteria from the
want of employment, once asked a sensible
female friend, "what she should do to get rid of
all her diseases and distrepes"? "go (said she)
and fall down upon your knees & ask the
Almighty to for some real trouble, and that
will cure you of all your imaginary diseases
and Distrepes".

9 a change of Climate. A cold Climate should
be prefered to a warm one.

10 Matrimony if our patient be single.
I am aware this remedy is forbidden by
Dr Lipot, Hufeland, and Mandeville, but it must
have been in women ~~to~~ debilitated ~~to~~

below the power of that, or perhaps any other remedy. I have known it produce the most salutary effects, and more especially where it has been followed by Childbearing. ~~In that~~ ~~case of this function~~ This will easily be understood when you recollect how much the Arterial disease of pregnancy attracts nervous aid excitement from the nervous System. Few women who bear Children are ever troubled with this Disease. ——

A long and faithful perseverance for months & even years, in the Use of all the Remedies that have been recommended is indispensably necessary to cure the Hysteria. In short our business is not so much to cure a disease, as to change the Constitution by removing its predisposition to it. It is in this way it is sometimes cured by time without the aid

do
of medicine of any kind, but it much often-
ends in Hypochondriasis by the nerves wea-
=ring themselves down from a laxness to
a stricture state. Sometimes in terminates in
which it only counterfeits for a while,
Organic diseases such as Palsy, Apoplexy, Epilep-
=sy, Madness, Pulmonary Consumption and
Dropsy. Hydrocephalus internus, Hepaticula
It is common to apply the
epithet hysterical to these diseases, but
this is improper, for no sooner do they
make their appearance than the hysteria
generally ceases. It should be considered as
the remote Cause only of all those organic
diseases, and they should all be treated as if
they had originated from more ordinary
causes.